

Instructional Focus

Author's Purpose, Perspective, and Tone

What to do and what to watch for: Every writer has a purpose and perspective. Every writer sets a tone or attitude for the reader. Recognizing the author's purpose, perspective, and tone will help you to understand and analyze it.

1. **Author's purpose:** Why did the author write this? The author's purpose in writing can be one or many. A passage may simply inform the reader. An author may inform you and entertain you at the same time. The author may try to persuade you and inform you or persuade you and entertain you. Usually the author's purpose is to entertain, inform or persuade a reader.

Certain types of writing generally serve certain purposes:

Persuade - Advertisements, editorials

Inform - News stories, informational articles, textbooks.

Entertain - Fiction, drama, narratives, first-person stories

Share - Diaries, reflective essays

2. **Author's perspective:** Perspective refers to the author's opinion. **The author's perspective is his or her particular opinion or position on the topic.** Perspective includes beliefs, biases and assumptions. This is the writer's own personal way of looking at the subject. Sometimes the writer makes personal judgments that are evident in the reading.



3. **Author's tone.** The tone is the author's attitude. **The tone of a reading is the attitude the writer takes toward the subject.** Tone can be seen in the way an author treats or writes about a character. The author's tone may be sad and serious or humorous and light-hearted. The tone may be sarcastic or making fun of something or someone.

The author's choice of words sets the tone. The choice of words sets a certain climate or atmosphere that you can sense. Your reaction to the reading can help you identify the author's attitude or tone. Identify specific words that make you react this way. These words have been chosen by the writer to set the tone.

